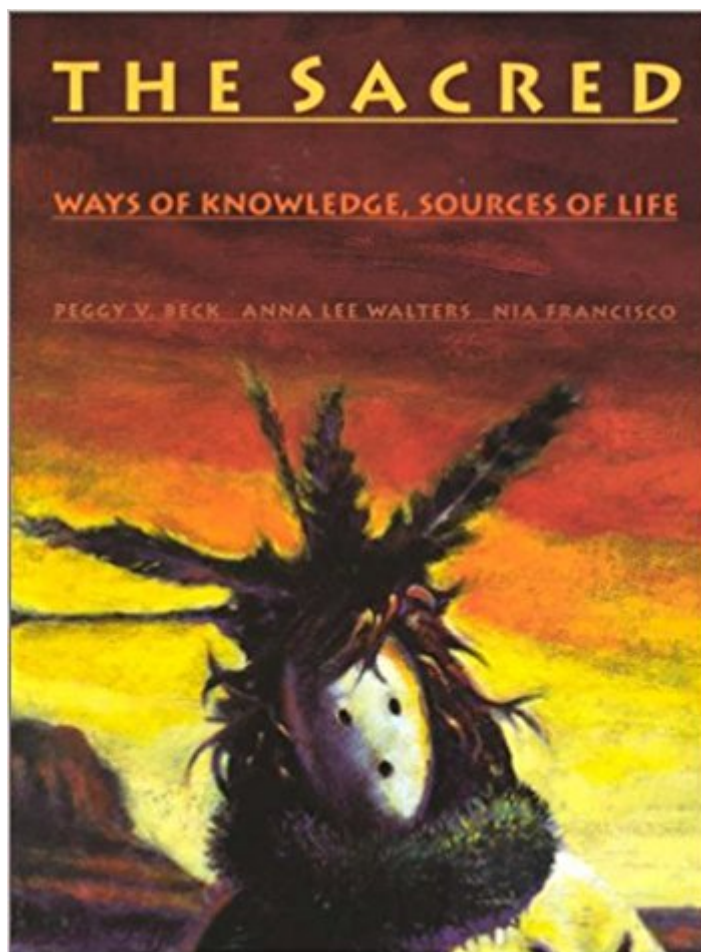




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The Sacred: Ways Of Knowledge Sources Of Life



Synopsis

'The Sacred: Ways of Knowledge, Sources of Life' offers an uncommonly wide-ranging consideration of the ways in which Native Americans view the world, their place in it, and their responsibilities to it. This world is not only physical, but spiritual, and 'The Sacred' describes the 'meaning, role and function of sacred traditional practices and observances in the lives of The People, individually and collectively.'

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Since I purchased my first copy of "The Sacred: Ways of Knowledge, Sources of Life," I have done all I can to promote the book as the best way to start learning about Native Americans and American Indian Life-Ways. I recommend it to everyone. In 1987 I published the following book review in the prestigious American Indian Quarterly. Some twenty-one years later, by beliefs remain the same, but my hopes that "The Sacred: Ways of Knowledge, Sources of Life" would become a regularly used textbook and standard reference book in libraries remain unfulfilled. And for me the question remains, how do I get people to read this book? I did my part, utilizing it as a textbook for classes I taught at Rocky Mountain College, Northern Montana College, and Carroll College, all here in Montana. When I left Carroll College, the instructor who took my place continued to use "The Sacred" for several years. Since then, however, it has been dropped for more "up to date" books, hoping to reinvent the wheel. Here, then, is my published review: One is seldom afforded the

opportunity to read such an exemplary book as Peggy V. Beck and Anna L Walters' "The Sacred: Ways of Knowledge, Sources of Life." As a laudatory contribution towards better literature on American Indians, "The Sacred" serves as both a fundamental resource and a textbook. Although it has been ten years since the book was first published, the book is once more available for classroom use. It is fitting, therefore, that it be re-reviewed in an effort to bring renewed interest in "The Sacred" as both a textbook and a resource. The impetus for writing and publishing "The Sacred" is to provide a textbook that emphasizes "the traditional characteristics of sacred ways in North America" (p. xii; emphasis in the original).

Excerpt(s): This textbook is about the sacred ways of Native American people in North America. Through examples from the oral tradition of The People, through interviews, speeches, prayers, songs and conversations, these ways will be explored. The material in this textbook will attempt to describe, not intrude by analysis, the meaning, role and function of sacred traditional practices and observances in the lives of The People, individually and collectively. This textbook will perhaps also help to correct the misinformed views of Native American sacred traditions and observances. These views fill the archives, the libraries, the movies, and the textbooks students use throughout the world. By simply letting The People speak we may come to better understand the profoundness of strength, beauty, and vitality of this dimension of American Indian People. Many Native People find it difficult to explain their ways of life, beliefs, traditions, and observances with the word "religion". Therefore, we tried to find a word that would better describe sources of life and ways of knowledge. For this reason we chose the word sacred which we will define in more detail later on in this chapter. (page 3) The Path of Life The place from which you had started at the beginning seemingly a long time ago, will now appear very close as if you had started but recently. Within several religions around the world is the philosophy or idea that life is envisioned as a path or road. The terrain through which it winds and goes is representative of the pitfalls, or turns of life one must encounter as one travels the "road of life." This is made explicit in the ceremony, like the Mide of the Winnebago. The above quote comes from this ceremony.

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